

**1. Learning at Aquinas:**

**Wednesday: 3:45-6:15pm**

The faculty and students of Aquinas Institute value and commit themselves to acquiring the following five practices in the course of their common theological endeavor as a means of moving toward our desired academic and ministerial outcomes. A high degree of skill and practice in the following areas is the goal of study and formation at Aquinas Institute.

- ▲ written and oral communication
- ▲ close reading of texts
- ▲ analysis of social context
- ▲ theological reflection
- ▲ collaboration

**2. Course Description:**

The course will examine and introduce students to the main basic theories and practical skills used in counseling and applied to pastoral counseling and spiritual direction ministries. In particular, the following will be studied: the therapeutic relationship, invitational, reflecting, challenging skills, assessment, goal setting, and solution skills, evaluation and termination skills. Also, the course will look at the unique approach that makes counseling pastoral especially regarding crisis intervention, premarital, marital and family counseling, grief counseling and other various expressions of personal counseling.

**3. Course Objectives:**

- > To come to a deeper understanding of pertinent counseling theories that support and focus effective pastoral responses to enhance the pastoral counseling relationship.
- > To study the current literature and incorporate into a ministerial approach helpful counseling skills that will assist the minister in meeting pastoral needs in a variety of settings.
- > To assist each participant in identifying one's own natural helping skills and develop them in the context of the helping relationship.
- > To reflect on the unique nature of the pastoral counseling relationship and its fundamental role in all forms of pastoral care.
- > To discover the value of different forms that the counseling relationship takes in the variety of ministerial settings in the life of the church and recognize one's limitations to offer counsel in some situations and the opportunity for referral to more expert therapeutic care.

**4. Required Texts:**

1. Young, Mark E. *Learning the Art of Helping: Building Blocks and Techniques* (Fourth Edition), Pearson/Merrill Prentice Hall, 2009.
2. Estadt, Barry K., et al., *Pastoral Counseling* (Second Edition), Prentice Hall, 1991.
3. Some added articles/book chapters will also be required reading for the course.

**5. Recommended Texts:** (see separate list of "Recommended Resources" at SLU Global website)